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T. B. HENDERSON.

Opera House Restaurant.

The Opera House Restaurant has

opened up again and will serve its

customers as usual in first-class style.

It is for both ladies and gentlemen.

ALVA HAWKINS,

Manager. x

Some nice lots on Hamilton Hill for

sale, at a good bargain. H. H. Lan-

ham.

The West Virginian respectfully

solicits job printing of all kinds.

Neat work at reasonable prices.

## STRANGE MENTAL GIFTS.

Prodigious Who Solved Ordeal Difficult

Arithmetical Problem.

Infant mental prodigies are intel-

ligible and even natural compared with

infant mathematical prodigies. How

account for the intuitive faculty by

which some children, unable to read,

write or cipher, can answer instan-

taneously the most complicated arith-

metical problem? Zerah Colburn, e. g.,

at six could neither write nor cipher

and yet could answer, apparently by

intuition and unhesitatingly, all kinds

of arithmetical questions. At eight he

came on show from the United States

to London and answered in a moment

and accurately such questions as, "How

many minutes are there in forty-eight

hours?" The child not only answered

it at once and correctly, but instantly

added the number of seconds contained

in that period. By what mental pro-

cess he arrived at these answers he

could not explain.

Here again is a question which

George Bidder, the son of a Devonshire

laborer, answered, at the age of twelve,

in one minute. It was put to him in

the London Stock Exchange: "If the

pendulum of a clock vibrates the dis-

tance of nine inches and three-quarters

in a second of time, how many inches

will it vibrate in the course of seven

years, fourteen days, two hours, one

minute and fifty-six seconds, each year

of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 55

seconds?"

Within the minute the boy had an-

swered correctly—2,165,625,744½; in

miles, 34,178 miles, 4½ yards, 2 feet

and three-quarters of an inch.

But the classical case of this kind

was that investigated by a committee

of such scientists as M. Arago, M. Libri

and M. Laplace at Paris. They exam-

ined Vito Mangiamela, the son of a

Sicilian peasant, eleven years of age,

putting to him such questions as: "Find

the cube root of 3,796,416," which the

boy did within half a minute. "Find

the tenth root of 282,475,249," which he

did within three minutes. Then came

this poser, "What number has the fol-

lowing proportions: That if its cube is

added to five times its square, and then

forty-two times the number and the

number forty be subtracted from the

result, the remainder is zero?" M. Ar-

ago repeated this question, but while

he was finishing the last word the boy

replied correctly, "The number is five."

Two things strike you about this ex-

traordinary congenial faculty, its mys-

teriousness and its uselessness. In ex-

emplification of the two take the case

of Jedediah Buxton. He also worked

out almost instantaneously the most

complex problems, but he could give

no account of the mental process by

which he solved them. This process

was so far from being correlated with

intellect or even intelligence, that

when Jedediah went to hear a great

preacher or went to see Garrick in

"Richard III." his sole interest in the

sermon or the play was the counting

up of the number of words uttered by

the preacher or by the actors.—London

M. A. P.

## Primitive Torpedoes.

As long ago as the sixteenth century,

efforts were made in war to sink the

enemy's ships by the use of rude con-

trivances that carried explosives. At

least one attempt was made on British

ships in the American Revolution, and

in 1804 the British tried a species of

torpedo on the Boulogne flotilla, then

lying in harbor. The device adopted

was called a catamaran and "was com-

posed of a lead lined chest measuring

twenty-one feet long by three feet three

inches broad and having flat top and

bottom and wedge shaped ends. With-

in were about forty barrels of powder

and various inflammables, some clock-

work machinery and enough ballast to

bring the deck of the contrivance to a

level with the surface of the water.

The outside of the whole was calked,

covered with canvas and well tarred.

The complete machine weighed about

two tons. Upon the withdrawal of a

peg the clockwork, after running for

a given time, which might be from six

to ten minutes, would fire a pistol and

explode the charge." No valuable re-

sults were obtained from it.

## Socrates and His Vixen.

Whether Socrates went barefoot or

not, he made many clever observations

in his time. Had the wife of Socrates'

bosom been as alluring as Cleopatra

we never would have had the contents

of his weighty intellect for the mental

illumination and moral improvement of

mankind. Verily 'tis an ill wife whose

blows have not some inspiration for a

philosopher. The wife of Dickens

scolded him lavishly, and yet Dickens

saw the merry as well as the sad side

of life. There is no evidence at hand

to show that Mrs. Dickens ever dogged

Charles, but in the case of Socrates we

find—in Nicholas Murray Butler's "Es-

say on the Henpecked Greek"—volu-

minous data to show that Xanthippe

not only whacked Socrates over the head

with her fist, but lambasted him with

the broom of that age. No wonder

Socrates walked! No wonder he

thought! No wonder he drank hem-

lock!—Schoolmaster.

## Mustard Plasters.

The following rule for a mustard

plaster that does not blister is given by

an experienced trained nurse: Mix

about three parts of flour with one part

of mustard, moisten it with a little

white of egg and spread between two

thin pieces of cotton cloth. Do not let

it stay on the flesh more than twenty

minutes. Its efficacy does not increase

after this time. The white of egg pre-

vents the mustard from raising a blis-

ter. There is quite a difference in mus-

tard. If the mustard used is mild

mix the plaster with half and half flour

and mustard. If very strong mix with

three or even four parts of flour to

only one of mustard.

I have some fine lots in Morrow

Place yet. M. H. Lanham.

## Dangers of the Sea.

The fourth day a perfect mountain

of water, the biggest one I have ever

seen in all my life, came towering up

and fell on the Roddam. I thought she

was foundered, but she shook it off,

and we saw that the after deck house

and the hand steering gear had been

carried away as clean as cutting off

the top of a cake. A piece of the truck

had got jammed in the wheel chains,

and the next bash the rudder got broke

the chains. In half a minute we were

wallowing helplessly in the trough of

the sea, and I knew that another big

sea would end the chapter. Getting

the men together, I made a try at get-

ting the chain picked up and spliced.

The steward, who was a brave lad

went over the side and got up the

loose end. We had fled ourselves to-

gether for the work, and that was all

that kept us from being washed over-

board. In a few minutes we had con-

nected up the chain with a strong

strap and were ready to get back amid-

ships when the wreck of the hand

steering gear, which was swinging

free, came clipping around and caught

the steward's leg, taking it off like a

butcher chops off a bone.—Metropol-

itan Magazine.

## Gifts at Baptism.

Gifts to infants on their baptism are

of ancient origin. Formerly the spon-

sors generally offered gilt spoons to the

child. These spoons were called apostle

spoons, because the figures of the

twelve apostles were carved at the top

of the handles. Rich sponsors gave the

complete set of twelve, while for those

who were not so opulent four was con-

sidered the proper number, and poor

sponsors would content themselves

with offering one. In the latter case

the handle of the spoon generally ex-

hibited the figure of any saint in honor

of whom the child received its name.

It is in allusion to this custom that,

when Canoner professes himself to be

unworthy of being sponsor to the young

princess, Shakespeare makes the king

reply:

"Come, come, my lord, you'd spare your

spoons."

The mug or spoon and fork offering

of the present day appears as a very

debased survival of a real, beautiful

christening offering.—Westminster Re-

view.

## The American Honey-moon.

Faithful in few things, the American

public yet remains true to an old hon-

ey-moon tradition which assigns those

to whom Europe is an impossible ex-

pense to Niagara Falls and Washing-

ton, the national capital. In these two

centers bridal parties have been since

long before the civil war the pride and

the prey of hotel men and cabmen.

Modern maids may consider them a

little old fashioned, but when the time

comes to choose a wedding tour the

west, the middle west and the rural

east of the United States are still true

to Niagara Falls and Washington. It

is in the spring and summer, when of

course the larger number of marriages

take place, that these resorts are so

popular. In the winter New York itself

is the Mecca of the newly wed.—Lon-

don Telegraph.

## Early Horse Race Prizes.

Prizes for winners of horse races

hundreds of years ago took curious

forms. The earliest was the "briglin

d'or," or golden bridle. After this the

prize in England